

AIR WAR COLLEGE

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THE BALTIC SEA REGION -  
IN NEED OF A MORE TOTAL DEFENSE

by

Tommy Petersson, Lieutenant Colonel, Swedish Air Force

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Advisor: Dr. Douglas Peifer, AWC

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## **Biography**

Lieutenant Colonel Tommy Petersson is assigned to Air War College, Air University, Maxwell AFB, Alabama. Petersson started his fighter pilot training in 1989 and was commissioned as an officer in the Swedish Air Force three years later. He has served at several different Wings, and accumulated some 2600 military jet flight hours of which roughly 1000 hours each in the 37 Viggen and the 39 Gripen systems. Petersson attended the Swedish Defense University Senior Staff Course 2006-08. Then he was Squadron Commander of 172nd Fighter Squadron. In 2011 he participated in Operation Unified Protector (Libya). He has also served in the Swedish Headquarters for some years, both with long term planning and more operational as the Swedish Air Force's ACOS A5. His latest Swedish assignment was as Wing Commander Flying (Group Commander) at Blekinge Wing. Petersson holds a Master's degree in History and is a member of the Royal Swedish Academy of War Sciences.

## **Abstract**

This is a paper about the security situation in the Baltic Sea region. Its thesis is that when it comes to the security situation there, the Western responses to Russia's actions can be characterized as too little, too slow. Further actions are suggested, here framed as Total Defense, including more resilient Psychological Defense, recognizing the threat and defending against it with civilian cyber security capabilities as well as quick, reliable, transparent information, and education in source reliability. Furthermore, a strengthened Economic Defense is needed, where especially the European dissonance in energy policy must be addressed, as well as an improved Civil Defense considering basic needs and protection of the people in times of crisis. Resilient people in trustful societies are needed to effectively resist cross-domain coercion. A stronger Military Defense is also needed, where all allies and partners live up to the two percent commitment, and with substantial multinational presence in Eastern Europe. There the force structures also should shift focus from the last decade's expeditionary mindset, and larger conscript forces are advocated. This Total Defense should be applied within a comprehensive approach, both nationally and in close international cooperation. NATO and the EU are both essential in this effort. Future policies should be aimed at comprehensive deterrence and denial, without escalation or cornering Russia. That country today is too interwoven into the global system to be contained or isolated in a Cold War style. Challenges for the West, besides sticking together, are to formulate policies that do not primarily aim at turning Russia into a country the West would like to see, but enabling both to coexist, recognizing the differences and the interdependency, laying down red lines for Russian behavior that include the Baltic Sea region. The Baltics constitutes NATO's first military line of defense; but politically, it might also be the last.

## Introduction

In March 2014 the Crimea was annexed by Russia. Military forces once again were used to change borders in Europe.<sup>1</sup> Economic sanctions and other responses by the West followed, against a revanchist Russia, challenging the international order. Nowhere, besides Ukraine, is this more obvious, or more dangerous, than in the Baltics, where three former Soviet republics, members of both NATO and the EU, border Russia. The Baltic Sea region is strategically important to Russia for several reasons; historical, geopolitical, military, and economic. There is a substantial risk that Russia, if not deterred, will continue its strategy of cross-domain coercion and hybrid warfare in the region; mixing hard and soft power across various domains through means of diplomacy, information, military, and economy. The intent of this paper is, while focusing on the Baltic Sea region rather than the Baltic countries specifically, to study Western responses to Russian aggression, evaluate them and make further recommendations for the future.<sup>2</sup>

The main argument of this paper is that when it comes to the security situation in the Baltic Sea region, the Western responses to Russia's actions have been largely adequate, but that they at the same time can be characterized as too little, too slow. Further actions are needed, here framed as Total Defense. Military means are not enough to counter hybrid threat or cross-domain coercion, blurring the border between war and peace. A more resilient Psychological Defense is required, recognizing the threat and defending against it. Likewise a more robust Economic Defense is needed, where especially the European dissonance in energy policy is addressed, as well as an improved Civil Defense, considering basic needs and protection of the people in times of crisis, whether natural or imposed. A stronger Military Defense is also required, with somewhat changed force structures. This Total Defense should be applied within a

comprehensive approach, both on the national level and in close international cooperation. These arguments will be further developed and explained throughout the paper.

In order to discuss adequate Western responses, one must first understand Russia. Therefore, the first section is about Russia's security policy, how it has evolved during the Putin era and an analysis about where Russia stands today. Secondly, the Western perspective is described, in terms of policy, actions, and perceived threat. The roles of NATO, the European Union, and some individual countries are analyzed and discussed. Thereafter, a section with recommendations follows, framed in terms of Total Defense.

## **Russia**

In order to discuss adequate Western responses, one must understand Russia.<sup>3</sup> First Russia's security policy, and how it has evolved under Putin, is described from a Russian perspective. Then an analysis is made, of Russia today and tomorrow.

The relationship between Russia and the West has deteriorated since the late 90's, from a strained and difficult partnership to outright confrontation. But there have been some zigzagging. In the aftermath of the 9/11 attack, relations with the West, in particular the U.S., improved. But this sense of partnership soon vanished with the Iraq war in 2003 and the expansion of NATO the year after, with the admission of the Baltic States, former Soviet Republics, something Russia always had opposed.<sup>4</sup> Moscow felt that the West could not be trusted. In 2007, Russia left the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE).<sup>5</sup> The year after economic events, starting in America, threatened capital markets around the globe. Russia's economy was badly damaged; in 2009 it shrunk almost eight percent, and has never really recovered since.<sup>6</sup> In the U.S., Obama became President, and with him a new "reset" policy towards Russia. It gave hope of a better dialogue, but during 2010 it became clear that Russian and Western interests regarding for

instance ABM defense were too different.<sup>7</sup> The Russian military really did not perform as well as publicly stated in the Georgian conflict in 2008, and needed reform. One part of it was ambitious procurement and reform plans.<sup>8</sup> The goal of modernizing seventy percent of military hardware by 2020 was set.<sup>9</sup> The other part was a new National Security Strategy, which introduced energy as an instrument of power, and a new Military Doctrine.<sup>10</sup> NATO's expansion and globalization of its endeavors, foreign military contingents on territories neighboring Russia or its allies, and foreign ABM defenses, were all pictured as threats to Russia.<sup>11</sup> Regarding national interests, it was declared that military forces might be used outside Russia in order to protect Russian interests and citizens.<sup>12</sup>

Russia viewed the Arab Spring in 2011 with suspicion, as another Western-funded social and political movement in order to overthrow governments, for instance in Syria.<sup>13</sup> Especially the, from a Russian standpoint, dishonest way the UN mandate for a No Fly Zone in order to protect the people of Libya was used to make a regime change, strengthened these views and the Russian stand on Syria.<sup>14</sup> The year after Putin returned to the presidency, but not without anti-regime demonstrations. Several new laws followed, restricting media, freedom of speech, assembly rights and more. By 2012 Russia was a country with political prisoners. In the Foreign Policy Concept of 2013 one could see an implicit fear of breakup of the Russian Federation coloring the threat assessment. Russia's objective was to be strong, and to increase its authority in the world.<sup>15</sup> In February 2013 General Gerasimov, the chief of the Russian General Staff, published an article with his views about past, present and future ways of warfare. War was seen as something more than military conflict. Economic sanctions, disruption of diplomatic ties, information operations and other non-military measures were seen as dominant, and something the West were doing against Russia.<sup>16</sup> In order to protect itself, Russia must respond with the

same means, what is now in the West often called hybrid warfare.<sup>17</sup> Then in the spring of 2014 the Ukraine crises really erupted, and Russia annexed the Crimea.<sup>18</sup>

The Putin administration's foreign and security policies have popular support. In 2015, over eighty percent had confidence in Putin's foreign policy, and approved the way he handled relations with the EU, the U.S. and Ukraine specifically. NATO has never been viewed very favorably in Russia, but as late as 2013 a majority, if small, had a favorable view of both the EU and the U.S.; two years later those numbers had dropped to thirty and fifteen percent respectively. Almost seventy percent said that the dissolution of the Soviet Union was bad for Russia.<sup>19</sup> Even though Russia has restrictions regarding media, freedom of speech, assembly rights etc., these numbers are significant.

Russian security policy and its development under the Putin era could be summarized as *realpolitik*, driven by fear, more than any ideology.<sup>20</sup> From a Russian point of view, all countries seek to expand their influence, using both hard and soft power. The West is definitely viewed as expanding east and interfering with Russian interests, by accepting new members in the EU and NATO, enforcing regime-change with military means and supporting democratic political movements. Russia views itself as somewhat weak and vulnerable in an uncertain and dangerous environment, thus it needs a strong military and strong control of its country and near abroad.<sup>21</sup> Using terms from International Relations theory, Russia thinks in realist terms, and does not believe in Western liberalism.<sup>22</sup> A Western NGO supporting a group with similar values within Russia is considered as Western indirect and asymmetric method of war; the opposite to the Western notion of these non-military measures as ways of avoiding war.<sup>23</sup> From a Russian perspective, Ukraine could not be allowed to turn into NATO territory, and the EU is regarded as a step on the way. Thanks to economic resources through oil and gas, and military reform, they



now had the means to do something about it. These actions, together with the information warfare in many Western countries, are from a Russian point of view defensive; striking back at an aggressive West, using the same means.

This does not mean that the Russian views are right. On the contrary, one could argue that these views demonstrate a lack of understanding about democracy, human rights, national self-determination and other values. The Russian zero-sum view of the world is problematic, since it leads to a security dilemma; absolute security for one leads to absolute insecurity for others. But to avoid further escalation it is important to understand Russia. One who arguably did was George F. Kennan, and it is almost ironic, and somewhat sad, that a sentence from his so called long telegram can summarize this analysis, seven decades later: “At bottom of Kremlin's neurotic view of world affairs is traditional and instinctive Russian sense of insecurity.”<sup>24</sup> The question of why Russia has so different views is also important. To answer that one must also consider history, nationalism, domestic politics, regime desire to stay in power, economic interests, and in the specific case of the Crimea look at the strategic importance of the bases there, and several other aspects, but those are beyond the scope of this study.

When it comes to the future policies and intentions of Russia, there are no indications of major change in power or the current system. Some public protests in the bigger cities are likely, but the regime's grip of power is firm. Putin will most probably run, and win, in the presidential elections 2018, and remain Russian president until 2024.<sup>25</sup> The Russian state is in many aspects weak; its power derives mainly from military might.<sup>26</sup> The economic situation is once again difficult for Russia, partly because of the sanctions, but mainly because of currently low oil and gas prices. Thus, when Russia recovers depend mostly on these factors. Russia for sure is setting new bridges to Asia, including China, but will still be dependent on the European market.<sup>27</sup>

Regardless, Russia has structural problems, many inherited from Soviet times, likely to hamper economic modernization for the foreseeable future. Its economy is very dependent on natural resources, a critical vulnerability, with low productivity in the manufactured goods sector. The economy is relatively small, with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) less than Italy's.<sup>28</sup> The per capita GDP seems stuck at around half of that of more advanced Western economies, which it actually has been since Tsarist times. Demographics are problematic mid-term due to low fertility rates in the 1990's, but Russia has now reached natural population growth. The biggest problem however is corruption. Russia today is one of the most corrupt countries in the world, and there is no evidence of improvement.<sup>29</sup>

All in all, the long-term future looks rather bad, and there are no reasons to predict any major changes the coming decade in Russian political system, national security strategy, doctrine, or economic system. Thus, the coming decade might be especially revanchist and dangerous, even if Russia in the long run does not possess the strength to seriously challenge the West. The Baltic Sea region is strategically important to Russia for several reasons; historical, geopolitical, military, and economic. For instance, about sixty percent of Russia's total maritime exports pass through the Baltic Sea.<sup>30</sup> Once it controlled the whole eastern side of the Baltic Sea, but today Russia is left with Saint Petersburg, its second-largest city, in the Gulf of Finland, and the Kaliningrad Oblast, to a large extent a military outpost, separated by NATO territory. Further, in the three Baltic States, there is a significant Russian minority, in total about sixteen percent, but in certain areas more.<sup>31</sup> This leads to the conclusion that there is a substantial risk that a revanchist Russia, if not deterred, will continue its strategy of cross-domain coercion and hybrid warfare in the region.

## **The West**

With the Russian perspective as a background, the perceived threat in the West, as well as its responses, will be described and analyzed. First the official views of NATO and military measures are discussed, then the EU, focusing on economic sanctions and energy. Both organizations however, are made up by member states. Thus some of the countries in the region, Sweden, Germany, and Poland, will be described, as well as the United States.

From NATO's perspective, the Alliance reached out to Russia in the 1990's, and has since then worked to establish a strategic partnership. Russian military actions in Georgia 2008 were found to be incompatible with the principles of peaceful conflict resolution. However, NATO decided to resume practical and political cooperation with Russia in 2009. During the Lisbon Summit in November 2010, NATO and Russia agreed to embark on a new stage of cooperation; of which some also took place the following years.<sup>32</sup> In response to the illegal annexation of the Crimea, NATO Foreign Ministers decided to suspend all practical cooperation with Russia.<sup>33</sup> At the 2014 Wales Summit, NATO agreed to enhance the capabilities of the NATO Response Force (NRF) in order to adapt and respond to emerging security challenges, including Russia. The result was the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF), a multinational brigade with up to five maneuver battalions, supported by air, maritime and special forces. The VJTF operates within the overall NRF structure, and will eventually be supplemented by two additional brigades, as a rapid-reinforcement capability, in case of a major crisis.<sup>34</sup> The VJTF has now been on stand-by since 2015, and a rotation plan has been established through 2022. Other decisions include the ability to reinforce through new infrastructure projects, make the Headquarters of a Multinational Corps Northeast in Poland fully operational, enhance NATO Standing Naval Forces with additional capabilities, and a more ambitious

exercise program.<sup>35</sup> Airpower has continued to be employed through the Baltic Air Policing mission, which also has expanded recent years.

At the Warsaw Summit in July 2016, NATO Heads of State and Government faced evolving challenges in the Baltic and Black Sea regions, where Russia increased its military activities, deployed new high-end capabilities, and challenged regional security.<sup>36</sup> They made it clear that the nature of the Alliance's relations with Russia would be contingent on a clear, constructive change in Russia's actions that demonstrates compliance with international law and its international commitments. Until then, it is stated, there can be no return to business as usual.<sup>37</sup> NATO also decided to establish an enhanced forward presence in the Baltic Sea region, specifically Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland, through four multinational battalion-sized battle-groups. Canada, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States will serve as framework nations, but several other Allies will contribute on a rotational basis.<sup>38</sup> At the same time the partnership relations with Finland and Sweden have deepened.<sup>39</sup> When it comes to defense spending, European NATO members pledged in 2014 to spend two percent of GDP on defense. In 2016, NATO's collective defense expenditure increased for the first time since 2009. But still, only five Allies meet the guideline.<sup>40</sup> All in all, NATO has taken several appropriate actions and decisions in response to Russia, but it can simultaneously be characterized as too little and too slow, which will be further developed in the following recommendations.

The European Union has its Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), often in close cooperation with NATO since most member states are members in both organizations. The term threat is not commonly used regarding Russia in open and official sources, but in 2016 the European Commission launched a new framework to counter hybrid threats, with the explanation that in recent years the security environment has changed dramatically with the rise of hybrid

threats on EU's borders.<sup>41</sup> Economically and diplomatically more are done. In March 2014, the European Council agreed to the first diplomatic measures in response to Russian actions in Ukraine. During the summer of 2014 economic sanctions followed, and in March 2015 those were linked to the complete implementation of the Minsk agreements. Diplomatic measures include G7 meetings instead of G8, thus excluding Russia, as well as suspension of EU-Russia summits. Further, asset freezes and visa bans apply to 149 persons while 37 entities are subject to a freeze of their assets in the EU. Substantial restrictions on economic exchanges are imposed with regards to the Crimea and Sevastopol, including bans on imports, tourism, and investments there. The economic sanctions in short mean that no EU nationals or companies may make financial transactions with a dozen major Russian banks, energy companies, or defense companies, as well as an embargo on both import and export of arms and related material.<sup>42</sup> Despite this, many connections remain strong.

The EU is still Russia's main trading partner. Although Russia-EU trade fell by more than a third in 2015, the EU's share of Russian external trade that year was almost fifty percent. Most of the reduction in value was due to a decrease in energy prices. Bilateral energy trade actually expanded some.<sup>43</sup> From a European perspective it is also important, since Russia provides almost a third of the EU natural gas demand.<sup>44</sup> Oil imports are also significant, but in that case it is much easier to change supplier. The import dependency of natural gas is high in many Northeast European countries, but one must also look at the share of gas in the total primary energy supply. That differs a lot. Germany has the highest share, over twenty percent, Poland fourteen percent, Finland and Estonia about ten percent, and Sweden almost nothing.<sup>45</sup> There has been some dissonance among the EU countries regarding policy and sanctions toward Russia recent years. One reason is different dependencies in trade and energy. The new gas

pipeline Nordstream 2, between Russia and Germany through the Baltic Sea, illustrates the contrasting interests of various member states. Many Eastern European countries fear losing transit fees and privileges, and see it as a way for Russia to export gas to Germany and Western Europe, while bypassing Ukraine and Poland. However, the Russian-German project continues, and the pipeline is planned to be operational in the end of 2019.<sup>46</sup> As was the case with NATO, the EU also has taken several appropriate decisions in response to Russia, but question marks remain, especially when it comes to energy policies.

Both NATO and the EU are made up by member states. All states in the Baltic Sea region will not be studied; instead a selection has been made. Sweden will be described first, representing an EU member, but not member of NATO. Then a comparison will be made with Poland and Germany, members of both organizations but with some other differences.

In Sweden, the official perception of the strategic environment changed during 2013 and 2014. In the spring of 2014, the Parliamentary Committee of Defense presented its report for a new defense policy decision; a document permeated with concerns about Russia's intent and capabilities.<sup>47</sup> For the first time since the end of the Cold War the Swedish Armed Forces were given increased funding. Military cooperation with Finland was emphasized. Sweden's partnership with NATO has also deepened in the process. Although not a formal member of the alliance, Sweden is contributing to NATO's Response Force (NRF). A new Host Nation Support Treaty between Sweden and NATO was also decided, and ratified by the Swedish Parliament in 2016.<sup>48</sup> Further, in March 2017, the Swedish government reintroduced the draft.<sup>49</sup> When it comes to the Swedish public opinion similar changes can be identified. The Swedish Agency for Civil Protection and Readiness<sup>50</sup> regularly conducts surveys of public opinion about different issues; the latest one published early 2017. The public will to militarily defend Sweden, even when the

outcome is uncertain, is pretty stable over the years; around 75 percent agree to that.<sup>51</sup> But the numbers who think Sweden needs a stronger defense have increased dramatically. Since 2014 a majority thinks that the Armed Forces should receive more funding, and only about seven percent think the opposite. Also since 2014, the survey shows that more people are in favor of Sweden becoming a full member of NATO than against. When looking upon what worries the public, a major change can be found in the view on Russia. In year 2009, one third was worried by the development there. Five years later that had risen to three quarters. During the same period, the numbers who believed that there was risk for military conflict in Europe had doubled to about forty percent.<sup>52</sup>

The official German view on Russia has also shifted in similar ways as the Swedish. The 2016 White Paper on German Security Policy states that the crisis in Ukraine is the concrete manifestation of long-term internal and external developments, where Russia is presenting itself as an independent power center with global ambitions. It is also reflected by an increase in Russia's military activities along its borders to NATO and the EU. The implications are viewed as far-reaching for the security in Europe, and thus for the security of Germany.<sup>53</sup> Polish official relations with Russia have been more strained the whole time, primarily due to historical reasons, and then worsened after Ukraine.<sup>54</sup> Poland has had close ties with Ukraine after the Cold War, and has tried to bring her as close as possible to the West.<sup>55</sup> The public opinions on these issues are also different in Germany and Poland. In Poland there is a majority supporting Ukraine joining both the EU and NATO. In Germany it is the other way around.<sup>56</sup> While seven out of ten Poles see Russia as a major threat to its neighbors (other than Ukraine), only four out of ten Germans do the same.<sup>57</sup> In both countries about three quarters of the population had a favorable view of NATO in 2009. Six years later it is about the same in Poland, but in Germany it has

dropped to 55 percent. Actually a majority of Germans in 2015 answered no to the question if Germany should militarily defend an Eastern NATO ally in conflict with Russia. Interestingly, German opinions about Russia generally are divided along the old east-west line, where eastern Germans have a more favorable view.<sup>58</sup>

In order to describe the security situation in the Baltic Sea region, one must also consider the United States. As the key member of NATO the country of course stands behind all previous described statements and actions. America also imposed several economic sanctions on Russia after the Ukraine crisis in March 2014, similar to and in coordination with the EU.<sup>59</sup> As a global power the United States also has other issues with Russia. The most recent and outstanding issue would be the Russian hacking of the American election 2016. Three intelligence agencies, together and openly, reported after the election that according to their assessment, Russian President Putin ordered an influence campaign aimed at the American presidential election.<sup>60</sup> As a response, the Obama administration imposed sanctions on six Russian individuals and five entities, as well as expelled 35 diplomats.<sup>61</sup> Although Candidate Trump made many positive remarks about Russia and Putin, as well as more negative about for instance NATO and the EU, so far no real changes in U.S. policy towards Russia can be identified from President Trump's administration.<sup>62</sup> However, Trump seems to belong to a so called Jacksonian tradition.<sup>63</sup> Further, Trump seems to have a protective approach to a perceived dangerous world. Likely he will have a more transactional, issue-based, approach, thus less ideological. An attempt to make a deal with the Kremlin might happen, in order to be able to then focus more on for instance Iran, ISIS or China. If it in that case will take the shape of a so called Reset 2.0 or a Yalta 2.0, or how it eventually will play out, are on the other hand different questions.<sup>64</sup> Many forces would be working against a major reshaping of U.S.-Russian relationship; history, allies and partners, the



U.S. legislative power as well as bureaucracy. The ongoing investigations about the Trump campaign's connections to Russia during the 2016 election will also limit the administration's possibilities in this regard. The assessment here is that most likely continuity will prevail.

## **Recommendations**

In order to effectively deter and defend against Russian cross-domain coercion and hybrid warfare, Western countries need to further develop a more comprehensive defense, here framed as Total Defense. The concept's major parts, Psychological, Economic, Civil, and Military Defense, will in turn be further developed. Finally, Total Defense and its international aspects will be discussed.

An improved Psychological Defense is vital. Russian propaganda and cyber-attacks, in other words information warfare, have been debated in professional circles for years. But after the fabrications and distortions during the Ukraine crisis, and the interference in the American presidential election it is now more commonly known. Several adequate measures have been taken the last couple of years, both by countries, the EU and NATO. The latter's Cooperative Cyber Defence Center of Excellence in Estonia and Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence in Latvia are two examples.<sup>65</sup> But it is not enough. As democracies with free and independent media, Russian style propaganda campaigns are, as they should be, off the table. But still much can be done. Externally, some initiatives are being made to increase Russian speakers' access to reliable information; more can be done there, especially in the Baltic region. The soft power of the Western world is still very influential. Domestically, the most important factor is general awareness. Even if it can be regarded as rather high now, efforts must be made to improve it, and keep it up years to come. For Russia, information warfare is about employing different techniques in a concerted attempt to destabilize an entity. Sometimes it is aimed at

ultimately control a state, but more often at the trust within a society or alliance.<sup>66</sup> Both Estonia and Latvia have Russian minorities that make them more vulnerable in this aspect. In order for Western countries to defend themselves, it is vital to recognize and defend against it with civilian cyber security capabilities as well as quick, reliable, transparent information, education in source reliability, and facts; coordinated within a framework of a Psychological Defense.

Western free market forces need to be supplemented with a strengthened Economic Defense. The Ukraine crisis demonstrated, among other things, the dimensions of economy and energy in hybrid warfare. While Ukraine's unique position allowed Russia a degree of influence it may not enjoy versus many other countries, there are reasons for Western concern.<sup>67</sup> Another part of an Economic Defense is the economic sanctions. At first glance, they did not work. They have not convinced Russia to alter its stance. But they have signaled Western cohesion, constrained decision-makers in Moscow, and maybe prevented more aggressive actions.<sup>68</sup> Even if global energy prices and a lack of willingness from Western banks to lend money are the most important factors for the Russian recession, the sanctions definitely have had effect. They have however, also had second order effects. Putin's inner circle has become poorer in absolute terms, but also stronger in relative terms as they now have larger slices of a shrinking pie. The government and the Central Bank are now the only sources of profit for many oligarchs, thus the Kremlin's grip is tightening. Russia is also strengthening its ties with some Asian countries.<sup>69</sup> But as shown earlier, a great deal of Russian-European trade continues. Which is good; trade promotes understanding and peace. The problem is when one side gets too dependent on the other, which arguably can be said about some European countries regarding Russian natural gas.

The gas issue has been discussed for years in Europe, and some actions have been taken. For instance, Lithuania has a new LNG terminal since 2014, and NordBalt, a submarine power

cable from Sweden to Lithuania, was inaugurated late 2015.<sup>70</sup> But more needs to be done, and governments must be involved with a national security perspective. Big infrastructure projects like these, as well as larger stocks of oil and gas, cannot be left entirely to free market forces if European countries want resilience and redundancy in order to reduce their dependency on Russia. Further, the unity and trust within Europe regarding energy policy must be improved, as the previous Nordstream 2 example has shown. Economics also connects with another crucial factor for a population's resiliency, food supply. In many Western countries, for example Sweden, the agricultural sector has transformed recent decades and become more efficient, specialized and technology dependent. Globalization trends have led to more imports and exports, as well as small stockpiles. Today, it is questionable if some European countries can survive very long if cut off from the others.<sup>71</sup> Looking forward, more attention must be paid to for example energy and food supply, within a framework of an improved Economic Defense.

People must have trust in the society's ability to provide basic needs, things like food, water, energy, safety, the rule of law, and health care. In these aspects the Western countries surrounding the Baltic Sea belong to the most developed and stable in the world.<sup>72</sup> But with high standards of living often come high expectations, and as shown by the example of food supply, modern Western societies are not necessarily as resilient as some decades ago. These basics must, to some level at least, function also in times of crises, for instance cyber-attacks or reduced flow of goods as parts of cross-domain coercion, and people must have trust in it. In accordance with previous mentioned psychological and economic defenses, this calls for improved Civil Defenses at the national level, adapted for our times, in order to get resilient societies. On the international level, Resilience Support Teams in NATO and/or the EU are suggested, in order to provide support to national authorities.<sup>73</sup>

Military Defense is of course also needed. NATO has recently, as mentioned before, decided upon four multinational battalions for the region plus the VJTF within the overall NRF structure; well needed, adequate and balanced actions. However, an unclassified war-gaming report from RAND last year concludes that the minimum ground force needed in the three Baltic States, in order to defend long enough for substantial assistance, consists of seven brigades. Three of them should be provided by allies, supported by airpower and enablers.<sup>74</sup> From a strictly operational perspective it makes sense; but the proposal is somewhat unrealistic under present circumstances. More important is the multinational forward presence itself as a defensive deterrent, and the commitment and ability to maintain it over years to come. However, some additional allied troops in the Baltics would be desirable, something that might be accomplished with more host nation support.<sup>75</sup> Further, some might be too negative when it comes to the possibility of defending the Baltic countries. The size is not that small; Estonia and Latvia together are larger than for instance South Korea.<sup>76</sup> With proper will, tactics and equipment it should be possible to delay an aggressor long enough for reinforcements to arrive. Valuable steps have also been taken when it comes to Western rapid reinforcement capabilities and planning, but that area would benefit from some further efforts. The same goes for defense spending. The commitment is good, as well as the trends, but more action is needed. Today only Poland and Estonia in the region fulfill the two percent goal. Germany for instance, although increasing its spending, still lies around 1.1 percent of GDP.<sup>77</sup> The Swedish situation is similar, and although Sweden is not formally committed to the NATO goal, in practice the country will have to follow its neighbors. All in all, the measures taken can be characterized as adequate, but simultaneously too little, too slow. The West needs to transfer from reactive to proactive.

Western military forces should shift focus, not completely but to a considerable extent, from expeditionary counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism to major combat operations within theatre. The Baltic Sea region can be characterized as an anti-access and area denial (A2/AD) environment. Many ideas from the American Air-Sea Battle concept, now renamed the Joint Concept for Access and Maneuver in the Global Commons (JAM-GC), can be applied to this region as well.<sup>78</sup> Defense of flow of goods is vital, as shown above. But the European theater is also different, with advantages such as a robust network of potential bases and the stand-in capabilities of allies and partners.<sup>79</sup> The arguably impressive A2/AD assets in Kaliningrad for instance, are situated only few miles from Poland and Lithuania, squeezed in between. There is also a need to focus more on the West's own A2/AD capabilities, as a part of a solid deterrent, with a defensive posture. Escalation benefits nobody. In many ways the situation resembles Berlin and the German border during the Cold War, but today's key geography is the Baltic Sea and the Suwalki gap. Time is a central issue in defense of the Baltic region. A very quick seizure by Russia must be avoided, since it leaves the West without any good, perhaps not even acceptable, options.<sup>80</sup> For the more eastern European allies, expeditionary capabilities as a driver for force development therefore should be reconsidered. There a conscript system, ensuring a large enough ground component to prevent quick defeat, capable of and equipped for prolonged resistance, together with previous mentioned measures, makes a good mix and deterrent. Some countries have also kept the conscript system, for instance Finland and Estonia. Others, as Poland and Sweden, have gone all professional. Further to the West, more expeditionary forces make sense. So for Sweden probably a mix would be the best solution.<sup>81</sup> For more western countries, as the U.K. or France, no changes of this sort would be recommended. These measures, although not complete in their details, would provide a more robust Military Defense.

Together these more effective and resilient Psychological, Economical, Civil, and Military Defenses, within a comprehensive approach of Total Defense, would provide better deterrence and defense against Russian cross-domain coercion and hybrid warfare. But no country in the Baltic Sea region, except Germany in a strictly economic perspective, is capable of defending against Russia all on its own. Thus, the most important question for the future is the Western will and ability to stick together, nurturing old partnerships and alliances, based on common values and interests. Russian military aggression in the region will only happen if the West shows weakness or division. But there are from this perspective some dark clouds at the horizon. The EU has in recent years, besides Russian aggression, experienced for example the Euro crisis, a refugee crisis, and now recently Brexit. More populist and nationalistic movements, often supported by Russia, seem to be rising in several countries. On the other hand, more than three quarters in the recent election the Netherlands voted on parties representing more traditional Western, liberal ideas.<sup>82</sup> The upcoming 2017 elections in France and Germany will be important indicators of where Europe is heading.<sup>83</sup> Based on current polls, it is hard to see any populist-nationalistic parties gaining majorities in these cases, even if also a minority can be influential. Furthermore, both NATO and the EU continue to work. For the security situation in the Baltic Sea region it would probably be better if also Sweden and Finland would have been full members of NATO. It is currently debated, but in the short term they will most likely remain very close partners.<sup>84</sup> Vital for the region's security is also the Transatlantic link. With the new Trump administration in the White House, several European countries will have to balance the next couple of years between on the one hand distancing themselves from some aspects of Trump's policies, while on the other hand keeping the good relations with America as a key ally.

While deterring Russia, the West also should seek to normalize its relationship with Russia as much as possible. Trust-building measures, inspections, Open Skies, and if possible a new CFE-like treaty, are important. Even if it is hard to recognize publicly, the West needs to realize that Russia will not let go of the Crimea, it can be compared to the militarized enclave of Kaliningrad. At the same time, the West should demand an end of Russian information warfare against the West in general, and cross-domain coercion against Eastern Europe, Ukraine and the Baltic States in particular. Internally, the West must strengthen its common commitment to defend the Baltics. The Eastern border of the three Baltic States constitutes NATO's first military line of defense; but politically, it might also be the last.

### **Conclusion**

Is the Cold War back then? Yes and no. Today's economic ties are very different. From a Russian perspective there is no ideological dimension, it is not like the Soviet era. Rather Russia has gone further back in history, to a kind of 19<sup>th</sup> century *realpolitik* with a zero-sum view on security. But from many Western countries' perspectives this arguably could be described as a growing ideological rivalry, where a globalized liberal world order stands against an authoritarian, state-capitalistic model, with a somewhat neurotic view of world affairs. Unfortunately, no shifts in Russian policies are predicted. Parallel, nationalistic and populist trends in the West, exploited by Russia, make the future hard to predict. More specifically about Western responses to the Russian aggressions in Europe and the security situation in the Baltic Sea region, this paper comes to the conclusion that Western actions have largely been adequate, but that they must be accelerated and strengthened. Moreover, military means are not enough to counter hybrid threat or cross-domain coercion, blurring the border between war and peace. Framed as Total Defense, arguments are made about more resilient Psychological Defense,

recognizing the threat and defending against it with civilian cyber security capabilities as well as quick, reliable, transparent information, education in source reliability, and facts. Further, a strengthened Economic Defense is needed, where especially the European dissonance in energy policy must be addressed. Thirdly, an improved Civil Defense is required, considering basic needs and protection of the people in times of crisis, natural or imposed. Resilient people in trustful societies are needed to effectively resist cross-domain coercion. A stronger Military Defense is also required, where all European allies and partners live up to the two percent commitment, and with substantial multinational presence in the countries bordering Russia. In the more eastern parts of Europe, the force structures should shift focus from the last decade's expeditionary mindset, and there conscript systems, capable of prolonged resistance, are advocated.

This Total Defense should be applied within a comprehensive approach, both nationally and in close international cooperation. NATO and the EU are both essential in this effort. Future policies should be aimed at comprehensive deterrence and denial, without escalation or cornering Russia. Russia is too interwoven into the global system to be contained or isolated in a Cold War style, and a collapse is beneficial to no one. One challenge for the West is to formulate policies that do not primarily aim at turning Russia into a country the West would like to see, but rather enable coexistence, recognizing the differences and the interdependency, as well as the competitive perspective and therefore laying down red lines for Russian behavior; internationally agreed red lines that include the Baltic Sea region. The last decade has shown that history is not linear. Or in other words, borrowed from ancient Greek mythology; overconfidence, hubris, can lead to punitive revenge from Nemesis.<sup>85</sup> The Baltics constitutes NATO's first military line of defense; but politically, it might also be the last.



## Notes

<sup>1</sup> This is a professional studies paper (PSP) written at the Air War College. I would like to thank especially my advisor Douglas Peifer, who has helped me throughout the process, but also more generally the faculty and my fellow students in AY 17 and Seminar 10. General inspiration and ideas for this paper have come from many lectures, seminars, and discussions. I would also like to thank my wife, who has provided basic proof-reading assistance in February and March 2017. All eventual errors however, are as always my own responsibility.

<sup>2</sup> The research topic is chosen from “FY17 INSS Research Program” (USAF Institute for National Security Studies, USAF Academy, Colorado), page 10, number 3.3, “Drivers of Conflict and Convergence in the NATO/Europe Region in the Next 5-25 Years”, which then is narrowed down. Other issues, although important, like China, Syria, ISIS, Iran, Turkey, Palestine, the refugee crisis, etcetera have largely been excluded in order to focus the essay. The studied time span is about one decade ahead. The term West is used here for members of NATO and/or the EU. Both these organizations are studied as primary actors, but also a number of countries; primarily Russia, since understanding of this country is vital in order to analyze adequate responses, but also some countries in Northeastern Europe, as representative examples. Notably, the three Baltic States themselves are not in focus, instead some neighboring countries, important for the defense of the region. The study is primarily built upon secondary sources, but also some primary when it comes to Western countries and organizations. All sources are of course unclassified. The analysis is mainly on a strategic level, thus avoiding the problem with the operational level’s often more secretive material and conclusions. The United Nations is left out as an actor since it has had limited importance in this particular case, due to Russia’s permanent seat in the Security Council. Other organizations such as OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) and OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development), are not studied as actors but are used as references.

<sup>3</sup> This first part of this section is to some extent a shortened and re-written version of another paper written by the same author during Air War College, AY 17; Tommy Petersson, “Kremlin’s Neurotic View of World Affairs”, Elective Course Paper in EL 6444: Russia, 5 October 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Jacob W. Kipp, “Russian Military Doctrine: Past, Present, and Future”, in Stephen J. Blank, ed, *Russian Military Politics and Russia’s 2010 Defense Doctrine* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2011), 106.

Russia was particularly upset with the Bush administration’s objective of regime change in Iraq, and that the U.S. pursued it without the support of the UN Security Council (where Russia of course had a veto). In 2004 Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia joined NATO.

<sup>5</sup> Andrey Makarychev, *Russia and the EU in a Multipolar World. Discourses, Identities, Norms*. (Stuttgart, Germany: Ibidem, 2014), 53.

Russia first tried to re-negotiate the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE), but then left it. In 2007, connected to the Baltic Sea region, there was also the Bronze Soldier incident, a dispute with Estonia that illustrates the important role history plays in the Russian narrative.

<sup>6</sup> Martin Russel, “The Russian Economy – Will Russia ever catch up?” (European Union: European Parliamentary Research Service, March 2015), 5.

<sup>7</sup> Polina Sinovets and Bettina Renz, "Russia's 2014 Military Doctrine and beyond: threat perceptions, capabilities ambitions". (*NATO Research Paper*, No. 117, July 2015), 11.

(ABM stands for Anti-Ballistic Missile. Author's comment.)

<sup>8</sup> Marcel de Haas, "Russia's Military Doctrine Development (2000-10)", in Stephen J. Blank, ed, *Russian Military Politics and Russia's 2010 Defense Doctrine* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2011), 30.

<sup>9</sup> Sinovets and Renz, "Russia's 2014 Military Doctrine," 5.

<sup>10</sup> de Haas, "Russia's Military Doctrine Development," in Blank, ed, *Russian Military Politics*, 39 and 51.

<sup>11</sup> Referring to, for instance, U.S. bases in Bulgaria and Romania.

<sup>12</sup> de Haas, "Russia's Military Doctrine Development," in Blank, ed, *Russian Military Politics*, 40-43.

<sup>13</sup> Charles K. Bartles, "Getting Gerasimov Right," *Military Review*, January-February 2016, 37.

<sup>14</sup> Kaan Korkmaz, ed, "Fallout in the Wake of the Crises: Impact on Key Actors, Regions and Conflicts", in Niklas Granholm, Johannes Malminen, and Gudrun Persson, eds. *A Rude Awakening. Ramifications of Russian Aggression Towards Ukraine*. (Stockholm, Sweden: FOI, 2014), 87.

It also reminded Russian leaders about the bombing campaign to coerce Milosevic's Yugoslavia regarding Kosovo in 1999, as well as the invasion of Iraq in 2003, imposing regime change.

<sup>15</sup> Gudrun Persson and Carolina Vendil Pallin, "The View from Russia", in Granholm, Malminen, and Persson, eds. *A Rude Awakening*, 26-28.

<sup>16</sup> Bartles, "Getting Gerasimov Right," 34.

<sup>17</sup> Cameron Johnston, "Russia's info-war: theory and practice", (*Issue Alert*, European Union Institute for Security Studies, April 2015), 1.

<sup>18</sup> Later in 2014, Russia published its latest Military Doctrine. In many ways it is similar to the 2010 version. But there are some differences. Cooperation with NATO is no longer seen as even a possibility. Domestic threats to national security are emphasized, and informational influence over the population, aiming at undermining spiritual and patriotic traditions, is regarded as a military danger. The term neighborhood, or near abroad, is widely used, referring to states bordering Russia, as its vital sphere of interest. Regime changes there, as well as military exercises, are viewed as military dangers. The Arctic is now specifically included in this sphere. Sinovets and Renz, "Russia's 2014 Military Doctrine," 1-4.

<sup>19</sup> Katie Simmons, Bruce Stokes, and Jacob Poushter, *NATO Publics Blame Russia for Ukrainian Crisis, but Reluctant to Provide Military Aid. In Russia, Anti-Western Views and Support for Putin Surge*. (Pew Research Center, June 2015), 28-30.

<sup>20</sup> Dmitri Trenin, "Russia's Threat Perception and Strategic Posture", in Craig R. Nation and Dmitri Trenin, *Russian Security Strategy under Putin: U.S. and Russian Perspective*. (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2007), 35.

<sup>21</sup> This paper only covers Russia's relationship with the West, but in this context one should also consider the Islamic threat in the south and a rising China in the east.

<sup>22</sup> Further, Russian thinking is perhaps best described in terms of offensive realism, rather than defensive realism.

<sup>23</sup> Bartles, "Getting Gerasimov Right," 34.

<sup>24</sup> George F. Kennan, "Long Telegram" (Moscow-to-Washington), February 22, 1946, part 2, sixth paragraph.

Another interesting, more modern, and somewhat prophetic quote from Kennan is from 1998, regarding the expansion of NATO into former Warsaw Pact countries: "I think it is the beginning of a new cold war. I think the Russians will gradually react quite adversely and it will affect their policies. I think it is a tragic mistake." Thomas L. Friedman, "Foreign Affairs; Now a Word From X," *The New York Times*, 2 May 1998. <http://www.nytimes.com/1998/05/02/opinion/> (accessed 16 February 2017)

<sup>25</sup> Stefanie Babst, "What mid-term future for Putin's Russia?" NATO Defense College, NATO Research Report, February 2015, 10-11.

<sup>26</sup> *The Fragile State Index* ranks Russia as country 114 out of 178, together with states as Lesotho and Venezuela. But still, in for instance the American *Global Power Index*, Russia is ranked number seven, mainly because of its military strength that is surpassed only by the U.S. and China. (Author's comment.) Sources: J.J. Messner et al., "Fragile States Index," The Fund for Peace, Washington D.C., 2016, 6-7; and "Measuring National Power – Using the Global Power Index to Understand Present and Future Global Power Relationships," Lecture and powerpoint, AWC AY 17, Foundations of Strategy course, IP 6403, 2 August 2016.

<sup>27</sup> Stylianos A. Sotiriou, *Russian Energy Strategy in the European Union, the Former Soviet Union Region, and China*. (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2015), 213.

<sup>28</sup> The Russian economy is also less than three times bigger than Sweden's, although an almost fifteen times larger population. Some World Bank examples of GDP in 2015: Russia 1.331 trillion USD, Italy 1.821 trillion, and Sweden 0.495 trillion. Considering the very different size of the countries (population 144.1, 60.8, and 9.8 millions) the Russian number is significantly low compared to the West. However, when considering PPP, purchasing power parity, Russia's economy is larger. <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/> (accessed 29 March 2017)

<sup>29</sup> Russel, "The Russian economy," 1-22.

Manufactured goods make up only a small part of Russian exports, and productivity in that sector is only around 40 percent of the OECD average. State-owned sector make up about 50 percent of GDP. Research and development expenditure and international patents are low compared to the West, in the latter case very low.

<sup>30</sup> Kalev Stoicescu, "The Russian Threat to Security in the Baltic Sea Region," Briefing Paper, International Centre for Defense and Security in Estonia, 6 October 2015, 3.

<sup>31</sup> According to the 2011 censuses there were 1,052,520 ethnic Russians in the Baltic States (556,422 in Latvia, 321,198 in Estonia, and 174,900 in Lithuania), having declined from

1,726,000 in 1989, the year of the last census during the Soviet era. The total population of three Baltic States today is about 6.1 million.

<sup>32</sup> Some cooperation also took place the following years, for instance regarding support of the Afghan army's helicopter fleet, joint counter-piracy operations, and submarine-rescue exercises.

<sup>33</sup> NATO, "NATO-Russia Relations: The Background", NATO Public Diplomacy Division, December 2016, 1-2.

<sup>34</sup> NATO, "Shape Fact Sheet: NATO Response Force (NRF)".  
<http://www.shape.nato.int/page349011837> (accessed 27 October 2016)

<sup>35</sup> NATO, "Warsaw Summit Communiqué, Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Warsaw 8-9 July 2016," 9 July 2016, paragraph 37.  
[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_133169.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133169.htm?selectedLocale=en) (accessed 25 September 2016)

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, paragraph 23.

<sup>37</sup> NATO, "NATO-Russia Relations: The Background," NATO Public Diplomacy Division, December 2016, 1-2.

<sup>38</sup> NATO, "Warsaw Summit Communiqué," paragraph 40.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, paragraph 23.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, paragraph 34; and Per Olsson and Peter Bäckström, *Defence Economic Outlook 2016: Global Outlook with a Focus on the Baltic Sea*, FOI-R--4315--SE. Stockholm, Sweden: FOI, November 2016, p 16. (The European countries that fulfill the two percent commitment are the United Kingdom, Greece, Poland, and Estonia; thus two in this region.)

<sup>41</sup> European Union, "EU strengthens response to hybrid threats to bolster security", 6 April 2016. EU official website: [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/3529/eu-strengthens-response-hybrid-threats-bolster-security\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/3529/eu-strengthens-response-hybrid-threats-bolster-security_en) (accessed 11 January 2017)

<sup>42</sup> European Union, "EU sanctions against Russia over Ukraine crisis", EU official website: [https://europa.eu/newsroom/highlights/special-coverage/eu\\_sanctions\\_en](https://europa.eu/newsroom/highlights/special-coverage/eu_sanctions_en) (accessed 28 January 2017)

<sup>43</sup> Nicu Popescu, "EU-Russia interaction: dense but tense", European Union Institute for Security Studies, June 2016, 1-2. By volume Russian natural gas exports to EU countries in 2015 increased eight percent, even if the value of that export decreased.

<sup>44</sup> Roxana Ioana Banciu, "Nord Stream 2 and its Soft Power – an Unfolding Playground for European Union." *Romanian Journal of European Affairs*, volume 16, No 2, June 2016, 89.

<sup>45</sup> International Energy Agency, *Energy Supply Security: Emergency Response of IEA Countries 2014*, Paris, France: OECD/IEA, 2014, 155, 169, 199, 359, and 418.

The import dependency of natural gas is about 65 percent in Poland, 85 percent in Germany, and up to 100 percent in Sweden, Finland, and Estonia. Most of it comes from Russia. But as stated in the text; this fact does not provide the complete picture. The share of gas in the total primary energy supply differs a lot.

<sup>46</sup> Banciu, “Nord Stream 2 and its Soft Power,” 87-88.

<sup>47</sup> Försvarsberedningen. *Försvaret av Sverige – Starkare försvar för en osäker tid*, 15 May 2014. DS 2014:20. (In English *The Defense of Sweden – A Stronger Defense for Uncertain Times.*)

<sup>48</sup> Swedish Parliament Decision, UFöU4. 25 May 2016.  
[https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/arende/betankande/samforstandsavtal-om-varldandsstod\\_H301UF%C3%B6U4](https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/arende/betankande/samforstandsavtal-om-varldandsstod_H301UF%C3%B6U4) (accessed 8 June 2016)

<sup>49</sup> Regeringen, ”Regeringsbeslut 3: Uppdrag till Försvarsmakten och Totalförsvarets rekryteringsmyndighet om mönstring och grundutbildning med värnplikt,” Fö2016/01252/MFI, 3 March 2017. <http://www.regeringen.se/artiklar/2017/03/> (accessed 29 March 2017)

<sup>50</sup> In Swedish: Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap, MSB.

<sup>51</sup> Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap (MSB). *Opinioner 2016. Allmänhetens syn på samhällsskydd, beredskap, säkerhetspolitik och försvar*. January 2017. (Karlstad: MSB publ nr 1068), 11.

<sup>52</sup> Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap (MSB). *Opinioner 2014. Allmänhetens syn på samhällsskydd, beredskap, säkerhetspolitik och försvar*. January 2015. (Karlstad: MSB publ.nr. 802.), p 42, 48, 88, 90, and 92; and Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap (MSB). *Opinioner 2016. Allmänhetens syn på samhällsskydd, beredskap, säkerhetspolitik och försvar*. January 2017. (Karlstad: MSB publ nr 1068), 48, 54-55, 58, 89-91.

<sup>53</sup> German Federal Government. *White Paper 2016, On German Security Policy and the Future of Bundeswehr*. The German Federal Government, 2016, 31-32.

<sup>54</sup> Polish-Russian relations are shaped by history, primarily the Second World War and the Cold War, but also older history.

<sup>55</sup> Agnieszka Bieńczyk-Missala, “Poland’s Foreign and Security Policy: Main Directions.” *UNISCI Journal*, No 40, January 2016, 103.

<sup>56</sup> Katie Simmons, Bruce Stokes, and Jacob Poushter. *NATO Publics Blame Russia for Ukrainian Crisis, but Reluctant to Provide Military Aid. In Russia, Anti-Western Views and Support for Putin Surge*. Pew Research Center, June 2015, 20-21.

<sup>57</sup> Simmons, Stokes, and Poushter. *NATO Publics Blame Russia*, 17.

However, if also ”minor threat” is included, the difference between Poland and Germany is much smaller, 89 percent versus 86 percent.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid, 18 and 23-24.

<sup>59</sup> Executive Orders 13660, 13661, 13662, and 13685. U.S. State Department website: <https://www.state.gov/e/eb/tfs/spi/ukrainerrussia/> (accessed 31 January 2017)

<sup>60</sup> National Intelligence Council, “Assessing Russian Activities and Intentions in Recent US Elections”, Intelligence Community Assessment (ICA) 2017-01D, 6 January 2017, p ii. (According to the report, Russia’s goals were to undermine public faith in the U.S. democratic process, denigrate Secretary Clinton, and harm her electability and potential presidency. The Russian government was assessed to have developed a clear preference for candidate Trump.)



<sup>61</sup> Executive Order 13694 and 13757. U.S. Department of the Treasury website: <https://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/OFAC-Enforcement/Pages/20161229.aspx> (accessed 31 January 2017)

<sup>62</sup> For instance the following quotes from Candidate Trump in March 2016: “I think NATO is obsolete...”; “NATO is unfair, economically, to us, to the United States.”; “We get nothing out of the United Nations.”; “I’m not isolationist, but I am America First.” And these from July 2016: “I think Putin and I will get along very well.”; when asked about helping the Baltic states, all members of NATO, against an eventual military aggression by Russia: “I don’t want to tell you what I’d do because I don’t want Putin to know what I’d do.” Sources: Maggie Haberman and David E. Sanger, “Transcript: Donald Trump Expounds on His Foreign Policy Views,” *The New York Times*, 26 March 2016. [www.nytimes.com/2016/03/27/us/politics/donald-trump-transcript.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/27/us/politics/donald-trump-transcript.html?_r=0) ; and David E. Sanger and Maggie Haberman, “Transcript: Donald Trump on NATO, Turkey’s Coup Attempt, and the World,” *The New York Times*, 21 July 2016. [www.nytimes.com/2016/07/22/us/politics/donald-trump-foreign-policy-interview.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/22/us/politics/donald-trump-foreign-policy-interview.html) (both accessed 5 April 2017)

<sup>63</sup> As this tradition is described in for instance: Walter Russell Mead, “The Jacksonian Tradition and American Foreign Policy,” *The National Interest* 58, Winter 1999/2000, 5-29.

<sup>64</sup> “Reset 2.0” is here referring to the Obama administration’s reset strategy in 2009, and “Yalta 2.0” is referring to the Yalta conference in February 1945 between the U.S., U.K., and Soviet Union, represented by Franklin D. Roosevelt, Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin, at Yalta in the Crimea. There the re-establishment of the nations of war-torn Europe was discussed, some would argue divided, without all countries present.

<sup>65</sup> Michael Rühle and Julijus Grubliauskas, “Energy as a Tool of Hybrid Warfare.” NATO Research Paper, No. 113, April 2015, 6.

<sup>66</sup> Johnston, “Russia’s info-war,” 1-2.

<sup>67</sup> Rühle and Grubliauskas, “Energy as a Tool,” 7.

<sup>68</sup> Francesco Giumelli, “Sanctioning Russia: the right questions.” European Union Institute for Security Studies, February 2015, 2.

<sup>69</sup> Cameron Johnston, “Sanctions against Russia: Evasion, compensation and overcompliance.” European Union Institute for Security Studies, May 2015, 2; and Giumelli, “Sanctioning Russia: the right questions,” 2.

<sup>70</sup> LNG = Liquefied natural gas. (Author’s comment.)

<sup>71</sup> Camilla Eriksson, Sofia Sollén Norrlin, Josefin Heed, *Hur skulle Sveriges lantbruk drabbas vid en avspärrning?* (Uppsala, Sweden: Sveriges Lantbruksuniversitet (SLU), 2016), 1-3. (In English translation: *How would Swedish agriculture cope with a blockade?*)

<sup>72</sup> There are many ways of measuring these things, but according to for instance the *Fragile States Index* 2016, the Nordic countries all belong to the top ten most stable in the world. Germany is ranked as 14, and Poland and the three Baltic States all are ranked from 27 to 38. In comparison the U.S. is ranked as number 20, and Russia as 114 out of 178, in between states as Lesotho and Venezuela. Source: J.J. Messner et al., “Fragile States Index,” The Fund for Peace, Washington D.C., 2016, 6-7.

<sup>73</sup> The concept of Resilience Support Teams, as well as Resilience Working Groups, in order to better cope with Russian hybrid warfare is further developed in for instance: Frankling D. Kramer, and Bantz J. Craddock, "Effective Defense of the Baltics." Atlantic Council, Brent Snowcroft Center on International Security. May 2016, 2, 11-12.

<sup>74</sup> David A. Shlapak and Michael W. Johnson, "Reinforcing Deterrence on NATO's Eastern Flank. Wargaming the Defense of the Baltics," RAND Corporation, 2016, 1-16.

This RAND report is also counting with some added Allied light infantry as well as the Baltic States own infantry, excluding National Guard, thus totally seven brigades. But in short, three mechanized brigades are suggested here, compared to the three battalions that are decided. Naval components were not part of the war-gaming.

<sup>75</sup> Meaning more developed infrastructure necessary to accommodate and train the allied forces over a longer period of time. As suggested by for instance: Kalev Stoicescu, "The Russian Threat to Security in the Baltic Sea Region," Briefing Paper, 6 October 2015, International Centre for Defense and Security, Estonia, 12.

<sup>76</sup> Rober Dalsjö, *Brännpunkt Baltikum*, FOI-R--4278--SE, June 2016, 41-43.

As an example, although in another context with different technology, German and Estonian units resisted an overwhelming Red Army in that terrain for six months in 1944.

<sup>77</sup> Dennis-P. Merklinghaus, "A New European Military Order? Germany to Increase Military Spending over Next 15 Years." *Military Technology*, 3/2016, 64-65; and German Federal Government. *White Paper 2016, On German Security Policy and the Future of Bundeswehr*. The German Federal Government, 2016, 117.

<sup>78</sup> See for instance: Michael Hutchens et al., "JAM-GC, A New Joint Operational Concept: Built on the Air-Sea Battle Chassis," (Air War College AY 17 curriculum, as submitted to *Joint Forces Quarterly (JFQ)* for publication, January 2017; and Richard Fontaine and Julianne Smith, "Anti-Access/Area Denial Isn't Just for Asia Anymore," *Defense One*, 2 April 2015.

<sup>79</sup> Which, from the author's perspective and experiences during AWC, sometimes are missing in the U.S. Air Force operational thinking, with a tendency to focus too much on stand-off capabilities also in the European theatre.

<sup>80</sup> The sentence "without any good, perhaps not even acceptable, options" refers to that there basically are, as discussed in the previously mentioned RAND study, only three options for NATO then. First, a conventional counter-offensive to retake the areas, probably a prolonged and bloody campaign that would include Russian territory, thus with high risk of nuclear escalation. Second, threaten with nuclear escalation from the outset. Third, concede, at least short term, leading to a new cold war indeed and possibly the collapse of NATO as we know it.

<sup>81</sup> Which by the way, during the final editing of this paper in March 2017, but of course with no further connection, was decided by the Swedish Parliament as the draft was re-introduced.

<sup>82</sup> In the election in the Netherlands 15 March 2017, Geert Wilders populist and nationalistic PVV (Party for Freedom) got 13.0 %, and the Socialist Party got 9.1 %. In the Netherlands, where there are no 4 % limit as in for instance Sweden, there are also some small parties with support of 2-3 %, with rather different agendas that not easily fit on a left-right scale.

<sup>83</sup> The 2017 elections considered here are: France, President, 23 April and 5 May (run-off). Germany, Parliament, 24 September.

<sup>84</sup> That however, does not mean neutrality policy as during the Cold War. All countries in the region are members of the EU, with its own articles of mutual assistance, such as Articles 42(7) and 222 of the Treaty of Lisbon. Sweden has for instance since almost a decade had the following quote as official policy: “Sweden will not remain passive if another EU member state or a Nordic country suffers a disaster or an attack.” Although from time to time majorities, both in opinion polls and the Parliament, for full membership in NATO, Sweden has not formally pushed the issue. Domestically, the reason is that the Social Democratic party, one of the two power parties in Sweden, still not is in favor of it. Traditionally, the left and the right seek consensus in major foreign affairs issues. In addition to that, there is always the Finnish dimension. For historical reasons it is hard for Sweden to join NATO without Finland, and there the support is lower. Further, a Finnish full membership might right now, given the rather high level of tension, not be wise. But perhaps a good tool in negotiations. (Author’s comment.) Quote from the 2012 Statement of Government Policy to Parliament, 15 Feb 2012, by Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt, in Micael Bydén, “Swedish Air Power”, from Olsen, John Andreas et al. *European Air Power. Challenges and Opportunities*. (Potomac Books, University of Nebraska Press, 2014), 175.

<sup>85</sup> Parts of the conclusion are inspired by: Babst, “What mid-term future,” 11; and Robert Dalsjö, “Hubris, Nemesis and the Search for Kryptonite – Why Eternal Peace Lasted Only 25 Years,” The Royal Swedish Academy of War Sciences (KKrVA), 19 January 2017. <http://kkrva.se/hubris-nemesis-and-the-search-for-kryptonite-why-the-whole-world-is-in-turmoil/> (accessed 19 January 2017)

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